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MR. LUCIEN WOLF ON "THE ZIONIST PERIL."

And upon them that are left of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth (Lev. xxvi. 36).

Only be strong and of a good courage (Josh. i. 6).

I.

IN an article on Zionism published in the *Contemporary Review* in 1899—before Mr. Lucien Wolf had abandoned his benevolent neutrality towards the movement—I wrote: "While the Western Christian is generally not unsympathetic towards Zionism, the Western Jew is generally in bitter or contemptuous opposition. . . . It is contended that Zionism is dangerous, plays into the hands of the anti-Semites with their cry of unpatriotism . . . that it is spiritually a misconception of the true future and mission of Israel; intellectually, a mere caricature of the exaggerated nationalism which has temporarily replaced the eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism; and politically, an undoing of all the constitutional rights Israel has won so painfully from civilized communities."

Thus, despite Mr. Wolf's oracular air of discovering deep truths and hidden perils, he has merely repeated the commonplaces of the controversy, and his elaboration of the above summary held nothing that I had not fully perpended before enrolling myself in the political movement for the establishment of a Jewish State. A vital necessity of the day could not, I decided, be dismissed as a "romantic anachronism," nor the effort to get a soil under the feet of the homeless and persecuted be fairly likened to the exaggerated nationalisms which would take the soil from under them. It is not even as if the apartness of the Jew was first meditated by Zionism—the apartness exists, a universal aloofness from that human brotherhood which Zionism is supposed to disturb. Apartness concentrated in a territory is far less against human brotherhood than apartness accentuated in every country on earth. The separateness of nations is a factor, not a foe, of the human brotherhood. As I have pointed out elsewhere, it takes two to make one brother. Geography without and psychology within are always fashioning different peoples, in whose development, with their respective contributions to civilization, we may impartially and fraternally delight.

The title of Mr. Wolf's paper, "The Zionist Peril," reveals rather the journalist than the historian. Mr. Wolf has not approached the study of modern Jewish history with the same scientific spirit that he brought to the study of Crypto-Judaism. Nay, it is somewhat significant that he has treated so largely of Crypto-Judaism without ever a flash of moral judgment upon this discreditable phenomenon, while his first outburst of righteous indignation is reserved for the efforts of Judaism to shake off the last vestiges of the Marrano period. If Zionism be a peril, so is the absence of Zionism, so is Judaism itself, and in any case the question for a race is not the lesser peril, but the truer ideal.

"The characteristic peril of Zionism" Mr. Wolf finds to

be that "Zionism is the natural and abiding ally of anti-Semitism and its most powerful justification!" This from the author of the luminous and voluminous article on "Anti-Semitism" in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*! Anti-Semitism has made a pretty protracted battle without either allies or justification. The wolf in Aesop had always a pretext for eating the lamb, whatever the lamb did, and a wise lamb, in such circumstances, will at least do whatever pleases itself most. This charge of justification of anti-Semitism accompanied the beginnings of the *Alliance Israélite* itself, for the *Alliance*, like the Anglo-Jewish Association, unifies Jewry politically, however embryonic its structure. As a matter of fact, the effect of Zionism upon the non-Jew is precisely the opposite to what the Jew, his nerves ruined by hereditary Marranoism, shiveringly apprehends. Zionism has uplifted the position of the Jews. It has already deposed the mediaeval tradition of money-lending and "jewing," and the successful establishment of a Jewish State would make the same change in public opinion as has taken place towards the Japanese. It is Mr. Wolf who is the pessimist, not I. Humanity sympathizes with a strenuous aspiration. England has gone so far as to endorse our aims; in America Secretary Hay permitted me to publish his view that Zionist work would in no way impugn the patriotism of the American Jew. The press throughout the world has been sympathetic, in some quarters enthusiastic. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Jew," writes a Christian journalist. Mr. Wolf's pessimistic dictum should be rewritten: "Zionism is the natural and abiding antidote to Anti-Semitism and its most powerful refutation." Even, however, if he is right it remains a pity that he has mixed up the spiritual perils of what he considers a reactionary ideal with considerations of a lower order. They throw doubt even on his higher argumentation by suggesting it is fear masquerading as philosophy.

II.

Mr. Wolf explains his conversion from a benevolent neutrality to violent anti-Zionism. It is I, alas, who am responsible—my “attempted raid” on the Hirsch millions roused the sleeping philosopher. In styling me “the irresponsible and irrepressible Dr. Jim of Herzlian politics,” Mr. Wolf is quite a Balaam. “Dr. Jim” is Prime Minister of Cape Colony. The process by which Mr. Wolf made up his mind that my charges against the trustees of the treasure were baseless is worth following. I accused the Jewish Colonization Association of incompetence and dubious legality. Mr. Wolf thereupon took the reports of this Association, and took the reports of the Zionist organizations, and finding that the Association recorded beneficent activity, and Zionism recorded barren debating, he concluded that my allegations were false. What delicious logic! In the first place, the charges against the Association had absolutely nothing to do with Zionism: they would have been as true or as false if Dr. Herzl had never lived, though my attention might in that case never have been called to the Association’s incompetence. Secondly, the achievements of the Association with ten million pounds at its back are contrasted with the achievements of Zionism which started without a farthing, and which the self-sacrifice of myriads of poor Jews has never been able to subvention beyond a quarter of a million or so. Thirdly, Zionism was still organizing its followers, building its institutions, and preparing its plans, and particularly forebore to imitate the ubiquitous pettiness of the Association. Finally, even admitting the legitimacy of a comparison which only the starting of the two associations with equal millions could have warranted, the record of Zionism without the millions is certainly not more sterile than that of the millions without Zionism. Works of charity are but a small factor in the life of a people. My suggestion that the millions be fructified by Zionism follows

naturally from my conviction that they are fruitless at present. This suggestion constitutes "the raid." Mr. Wolf stoutly defends the treasure against my contention that Baron de Hirsch, "had he lived to know Dr. Herzl's scheme and to witness its progress, would have unhesitatingly given his millions to the Zionist exchequer." But Baron de Hirsch did know of the Zionist scheme, Mr. Wolf exultantly tells us. Herzl even consulted the Baron in 1895, and solicited his support. Mr. Wolf has seen the documents! This is Mr. Wolf's notion of a crushing refutation. Of my argument, even as stated by himself, he omits to consider a full half. Baron de Hirsch, though he may have known of the Zionist project, certainly did not live "to witness its progress." Dr. Herzl consulted him in 1895. In 1895! Before Herzl had proved even to himself that Jewry in congress would rally to his idea, and that myriads would volunteer for the work which the Baron—as he lamented to Mr. Lucien Wolf—was left to grapple with single-handed! In 1895 many an ardent Zionist of to-day said "No" to Herzl. And if Mr. Wolf forgets half of my argument, even as stated by himself, he likewise forgets half of it as stated by me. I said, had the Baron lived to witness not only the progress of Zionism but the failure of his own scheme. In 1895 the Baron's brain was occupied by a rival scheme of salvation. What would he have said to-day when, despite the Association's silence and Mr. Wolf's speech, Jewish public opinion is everywhere convinced of the futility of the Hirsch solution, viewed as a solution of the Russo-Jewish question? Even in his original deed Baron de Hirsch did not exclude Palestine. If he did, how is it that his trustees are pottering there to-day? And if he was not a Zionist, he certainly dreamed of a *Judenstaat*, though he saw it arising in the Argentine. The very articles of the Association provide for charters, fortifications, and other things not easily reconcilable with mere philanthropy, though, in its repudiation of the East African scheme, the Association flies from politics as from the plague. I will

not, however, seize the opportunity Mr. Wolf has given me to repeat my case against the Association, since it is infinitely more important to consider his case against Zionism.

III.

Mr. Wolf starts with the "Allgemeine Verwilderung" which followed the failure of Sabbethai Zevi to lead the Jews to Palestine, and would have us draw the moral not to be naughty nationalists. But the moral is only not to rely on miracle. Sabbethai Zevi's movement was not a rational political movement; it was a fantastic adventure which the Sultan crudely terminated. And yet Mr. Wolf gravely writes: "Re-nationalization had been shown to be impossible, not only for political reasons, but because the Jews themselves had ceased to possess the elements of a revival of their national life." "Not only for political reasons!" This is like saying the man died, not only because he was decapitated, but because he could not get a living. What chance did Sabbethai Zevi's followers get of showing whether they possessed the elements of a national life? As a matter of fact, the religious and political unity of the Jews was far greater in the seventeenth century than it is now—political Zionism is all but too late. But even now, so far from being "scattered, divided, and polyglot," the Jews are mostly clustered in Russia and Austro-Hungary (the "providential dispersion," of which Mr. Wolf tells us, having left strange clots and clumps), wherein they manifest a strongly-marked national existence and possess, whether through Hebrew or Yiddish, a unifying language. Whether these characteristic traits of theirs are agreeable to Mr. Wolf or not, is beside the question. When a people, even at the present day, produces a prolific literature both in Hebrew and Yiddish, and is found developing a national drama and initiating a national art, it requires some boldness to maintain that the Jews could not, at the

Mendelssohnian period, have evolved a worthy national life of their own, had Mendelssohn hit on the alternative policy of acquiring a soil for them, instead of depriving them of their dream of one. In any case, why were the Jews "at the turning-point of a road which led direct to re-barbarization"? The traditional form of Jewish life, even at its most superstitious, is no such terrible thing: contrasted with the general life of the European masses, with their various manners, morals, and Churches, it certainly is not peculiarly barbarous. It is even peculiarly literate, after its mediaeval fashion. It is in fact a civilization far antedating that of Europe. I do not even find that Graetz, whom Mr. Wolf professes to follow, ascribes the general demoralization to the failure of the Nationalist movement: he connects it with the breakdown of the Jewish democratic ideal under a new worship of wealthy ignoramuses. But so far from rescuing Jewry from the effects of this disintegration, Mendelssohn precipitated the final smash—the impingement of the Western world on the opened Ghetto. For to the specifically Jewish disintegration is now added the general disintegration which the Jews share with the post-Darwinian world, and they are not, like the other races, conserved by a territory which may become the unchanging background for a succession of beliefs.

IV.

The remedies employed by the Mendelssohnian movement were "in the domain of religion, a new steadfastness founded in reasonable theology and historical study, and in the domain of politics local assimilation and emancipation." The political remedy is at least intelligible. But what is "reasonable theology," and why should it be limited to twelve millions out of twelve hundred millions, or one per cent. of mankind? The fatal weakness of all Jewish religious reform lies in the attempt to maintain

a national church on a religion which has been carefully denationalized. Or if the twelve millions must still keep themselves separate to preach this "reasonable theology," why should they be so anxious to assimilate to their environment in every other respect? You have more chance of attracting attention by deviation from the normal. All religious sects in history have been founded by people already like their neighbours, but only anxious to become differentiated. For a differentiated sect to be anxious to become assimilated is indeed a suspicious reversal. When Mr. Wolf asks in horror whether "once more we must perforce turn Jewish history topsy-turvy, if we are to save Judaism and the Jewish people from extinction," he admits in his very question that we *have* already once turned Jewish history topsy-turvy. Turning it topsy-turvy "once more" is therefore only restoring it to its natural position. If Mendelssohn had no scruple in reversing the historical policy of some thirty centuries, why should we pay such respect to the policy of a single century? A people may well have several generations of aberration: here in England we have Mr. Chamberlain calling upon his countrymen to reverse the financial policy of half a century. Mr. Wolf himself reverses his views every few years, for, in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, he declares roundly: "The idea that Zionism is a set-back of Jewish history, an unnatural galvanization of hopes long since abandoned for a spiritual and cosmopolitan conception of the mission of Israel, is a controversial fiction."

Mr. Wolf gives as "the new Zionist postulate" that Judaism is decaying, that emancipation is a fraud, and that assimilation is an ethnical impossibility. Judaism is indeed decaying, and emancipation is, if not a fraud, not wholly genuine; but as for assimilation being an ethnical impossibility, it is only too possible. Its fatal facility is one of the greatest arguments for Zionism. Mr. Wolf actually includes in his brief against Zionism one of the

main arguments on which the other side relies to win its case, and the vigour with which he presses the point, his triumphant demonstration of the Jew's ready adaptability to his European environment, make him a valuable ally. He reminds one of the K. C. whom his junior kept nudging to try to convey to him that he was not for the defendant, but for the plaintiff. No sane Zionist dreams of likening the Jewish problem to "the Negro and Chinese problems of the United States." We know that Jewish blood has intermingled in equal marriage with that of every white people. Long before "the Mendelssohnian solution" the Jews had lived in proud equality with the grandees of Spain at its proudest period.

No, "the Zionist postulate" embraces, not rejects, the assimilability of the Jew. As regards its two other items, if Mr. Wolf really thinks that Judaism is not decaying, and that emancipation is wholly genuine, I can only say that it shows how little a historian may see of the period in which he lives. He actually quotes Boerne's prediction that the Jew would, under the sunshine of freedom, cast off the cloak of orthodoxy he hugged around him in storm, and asserts that "the Jew still wears that cloak more proudly, more earnestly, more intelligently than in the old days." The cloak of orthodoxy? Mr. Wolf should come to America, where I write this, to see the effects of the sunshine of freedom. There is no King in Israel, and every man does what is right in his own eyes; every child even, for one of the saddest results of "Americanization" is the demoralization of the boys, and the disintegration of the old Jewish home-life. Never was there a profounder prophecy than Boerne's, never one more literally fulfilled. Not inaptly has the narrow old *Judengasse* of Frankfort been transformed into the broad modern *Boernestrasse*. With such purblindness for the present, no wonder that Mr. Wolf should survey Zionism without a trace of the insight he has brought to bear upon the past.

V.

Dismissing "the Zionist postulate" as absurd—and the item invented by Mr. Wolf is indeed absurd—Mr. Wolf now makes a discovery, which is a favourite discovery of the anti-Zionist. For does it not cut the very ground from under Zionism? The Jews are not a race at all; they represent merely a religion! Why then all this nationalistic pother? "Merely a religious community of great antiquity, which in consequence of inter-marriage during some two thousand three hundred years has acquired a more fixed physical type than younger religious communities. Given the same age and the same harsh history, and other religious communities would develop for themselves a racial identity not less marked than that of the Jews." The Jewish race then is not a race—it has merely been formed into one. What more need the Zionist claim? Whether this race has arisen by prehistoric causes or by causes within our ken, how does this affect its present differentiation? The Americans are not a people—they have merely been formed into one. Britain is not an island—it was merely broken off from France by the sea. "The European Jews then are a religious community of white men, not essentially different from the European Roman Catholics and Protestants." That is to say, the Jews, though racially and facially differentiated by a historic process of twenty-three centuries, may nevertheless be considered on the same footing as Catholics and Protestants not yet, nor ever likely to be, racially and facially differentiated! Mr. Wolf's scorn for the etymology, sociology, and anthropology of the Zionists is boundless. But how about his own logic and his own history? The "essential difference" between the European Jews and the European Christians must be sought in their origins. Behind the "religious community" of the modern Jews lies a territorial past. Israel is not "merely a religious community of great antiquity," it is the broken and scattered remains of a people with a soil,

and wars, and dynasties, and a magnificent epical literature that has moulded the thought and the art of half the world. Christianity began with denationalization, Judaism has never shaken nationalism off. In Judaism the two threads—territorial and religious—have lain entangled in that confusion which is the unavoidable legacy of the period when the two were one. To cut away the territorial thread, and to disentangle the religious, would now be perfectly legitimate. We are the heirs of the past, not its slaves. But what is not legitimate is to deny the past. To pretend that the Jews are "merely a religious community," like Catholics and Protestants, that their whole literature, liturgy, and consciousness are not woven through and through with nationalism, is to obscure history in sophistry. In Ellis Island, off New York—where the Jewish tragedy may be seen in its most heartrending phase, as the refugees from Europe are turned back across the waste of waters at the very gates of their Paradise—this question of "Race or Religion" comes up in very practical shape. But the guardian angels of the port, whose flaming swords turn every way, have decided that "Hebrew" connotes "race or people" as much as its alphabetical neighbours, Greek and Irish. And in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Mr. Wolf himself speaks of "the bond of a common race," and instructs the world that Jewish solidarity has been transferred from a religious to a racial basis.

Even, however, were the Jews "merely a religious community," that would not profit Mr. Wolf's case an iota. On the contrary, it is just religious communities that are driven to build up new countries so as to develop their religion freely, and under the most favourable conditions. New England was founded by Puritans who, although "anglicized," reacted against their old England so strongly that nothing but a new England in a new continent could satisfy their desire for differentiation. The Boers, like the Jews, have ever regarded themselves as a chosen people; but Kruger was never heard to boast of their

assimilability. Even, therefore, had there never been a Jewish State, it might be necessary to create one.

Mr. Wolf, however, is at great pains to prove that differentiation and assimilation can be combined. I have no doubt but that the Puritans, too, could have found a way of staying on in England, if they had put their comfort first. And comfort and social position is, after all, the real quest of the "Mendelssohnian movement."

VI.

"All that assimilation means," writes Mr. Wolf, "is that the Jews shall adopt the social manners and customs, and share in the unsectarian interests, traditions, hopes, and ideals of their non-Jewish fellow citizens." Is that all? The trouble is that Judaism is a religion in which the concept of secularity does not occur. To the Orient, all is religion, and religion is all. As the Prusso-Jewish conscript replied in bewilderment when asked to state his religion: "Die Christen haben Religion: wir sind doch Juden." In a Christian country "the unsectarian interests, traditions, hopes, and ideals" are six-sevenths of life, the other seventh being roughly representable by Sunday. And many of these interests, traditions, hopes, and ideals clash with the Jewish.

Yet to all this six-sevenths of non-Jewish life we are to assimilate without ever attempting to Judaize any of it, even when popular desire runs counter to every Jewish ideal. And at the same time as we are to absorb ourselves in the unsectarian ambitions of the particular people among whom we live, we are to pray for a restoration to Zion. For the school of Judaism to which Mr. Wolf belongs does not even remove Zionism from the prayer-book. And just as assimilation may be combined with Zionist prayers, so may it be combined with matrimonial exclusiveness towards the very people to whom you assimilate. Mutual "intermarriage is no bar to assimilation." Indeed it is

not. In Germany there are whole groups of baptized Jews who still marry among themselves. It is not the Jew's power of assimilating that is in question, it is his power of remaining Jewish.

But Mr. Wolf is mistaken in imagining that mixed marriages are equally forbidden by the other great religions. A Protestant is perfectly at liberty to marry a Jew, though the Jew may not be at liberty to marry a Protestant. Catholic and Protestant may intermarry on certain conditions. Mr. Wolf confuses rarity of mixed marriage with prohibition of mixed marriage. Social circles that do not intersect do not intermarry. That is a simple induction from sociological facts. Equally, social circles that do intersect do intermarry. And conversely, social circles that will not intermarry should not intersect. While Protestant and Catholic households are not anxious to entertain one another, the Jewish anxiety for separateness—once safeguarded by the dietary laws—is now combined with a paradoxical anxiety for Christian society. Mixed marriage increases exactly with the growth of the common segment of the two circles.

Mr. Wolf's statistics to prove that the Jew is really not much more exclusive than the Protestant or the Catholic err, strangely enough, in his own disfavour. The Jew marries out not less but more than the Protestant or the Catholic. Mr. Wolf's statistics are vitiated by being made in Germany, where if only thirty-nine Jews per thousand marry non-Jews, it is because a large number of Jews have left the fold altogether, and their marriages are enumerated as Catholic and Protestant. In Australia the rate of mixed marriages for Jews is nearer thirty-nine per hundred than thirty-nine per thousand. I gladly present Mr. Wolf with this additional disproof of "the portentous Zionist theory of our unassimilability." For, despite his contempt for Zionist etymology, assimilation and fusion are, if not one, at any rate united. Nor need fusion be crudely physical: the assimilation whose reality Mr. Wolf so comically

labours to bring home to us is indistinguishable from the effects of physical fusion. I have elsewhere demonstrated from the fact that emancipated Jewish life leaves no specific deposit in language, that it contains no genuine variations from non-Jewish life, in short—that the modern Jews have died without knowing it. Mr. Wolf's samples of brilliantly assimilated Jews—Heine for Germany, Catulle Mendès for France, Beaconsfield for England—are an amazing selection for a thinker to whom the Jews are “merely a religious community.” They fit very well into the Zionist scheme, but what are they doing in the synagogue galley? Once again I almost think that Mr. Wolf has forgotten he is for the plaintiff, not for the defendant.

VII.

No, assimilation is evaporation, the Mendelssohnian solution is *dissolution*. The transition from assimilation to fusion is merely a question of time. You cannot fix your own boundary to living, ever-moving forces. For a time you will nurse your children on two historic traditions. For a time the Jewish stream will run parallel with the non-Jewish. But gradually the stronger stream will absorb the weaker. The six-sevenths of life will obliterate the one-seventh. When the Jewish code clashes with the Christian—as in the recent American case of uncle and niece criminally indicted for intermarriage—it is not the Jewish code that will survive. For a time you may serve two masters, like the eighteenth-century Highlanders who paid taxes to King George and King Charles, but sooner or later one master will command all your service. The little Jewish immigrants into America are made to declaim “Allegiance to the Flag” in a form specially drawn up for Jewish schoolchildren: “Flag of our great Republic, inspirer in battle, guardian of our homes, whose Stars and Stripes stand for bravery, purity, truth, and union, we salute thee! We, the natives of

distant lands, who find rest under thy folds, do pledge our hearts, our lives, and our sacred honour, to love and protect thee, our country, and the liberty of the American people forever." It is touching to hear the children reciting this in their quaint foreign accent. as they point to the flag which one of them upholds. And they appear to understand it: they declaim it with sincere emotion. How can the dream of Zion coexist with this sacred pledge to America for ever? President Roosevelt recently declared: "It is absolutely essential that the different peoples coming to our shores should not remain separate, but should fuse into one." The United States are "the mills of God," grinding the motley races into a new pattern. Assimilation without fusion is possible to races with territorial or colour boundaries. But races adventuring among other races of the same colour must either fuse or absorb, eat or be eaten. Only two homeless races in history have attempted to stand outside fusion. One is the Jewish race, the other is the gipsy race. But the gipsies have pitched their tents outside civilization; they have never attempted to become householders or city fathers. They have never sung the patriotic songs of local chauvinism. They have never yearned for "assimilation." Hence they may truly be an eternal people. The Jews are an evaporating people. How else should one of the most prolific peoples in history number only twelve millions after all these centuries of existence? It is Mr. Wolf himself who has pointed out that scarcely any of the old Anglo-Jewish families survive. The Jewish people has been preserved from age to age by a mere remnant, but its survival thus far is no proof of its continuance under the crowning attack of "assimilation." The Campanile of Venice fell at last. In the whole of modern Jewish history before the Zionist movement, there is only one statesmanlike episode—the refusal of civil rights by the Jewish community of Amsterdam.

Mr. Wolf says "the assimilability of the Jew is far beyond the reach of reasonable doubt, and if we may judge by our

experience of the last hundred years, it will soon be beyond the reach of reasonable cavil." It will indeed. The Jew will be assimilated away.

VIII.

But there is a reverse to the shield of "assimilation," as Mr. Wolf himself supposes the Zionist to retort. It is the unwillingness of the non-Jewish peoples to permit the assimilation, it is the resurgence of anti-Semitism even in countries where legal emancipation has been won. The wind is active, not the sun, "the cloak of orthodoxy" is hugged close. Israel is saved by his persecutors, as well as by his fools (though Mr. Wolf misquotes me as ascribing everything to the fools). In America itself, to which the Jew pledges himself for ever with so much emotion, he cannot join a University Club or a College "Frat," nor send his children to private schools, nor stay at certain hotels, nor enjoy general society. As for Europe, let us hear the man who knows it most intimately from East to West—Arminius Vambéry. "It is surprising that the Jew, treated as a stranger everywhere in Europe, still persists in ingratiating himself into the national bond." But there is another aspect (which Mr. Wolf overlooks). The majority of the Jews are placed amid barbarous environments, in which even Mr. Wolf could not wish them to exercise their aptitude for assimilation. And yet he speaks of the greatest body of Jews in the world, the Jews in the Pale, as in a state of "arrested assimilation." Assimilation to what? to whom? To the Russian peasantry? Jews, then, have no inward spring of virtue or development! The people that Lecky described as the only torch-bearer in the dark ages exists now merely to be assimilated! And it is useless relying on the salvation of persecution. Mr. Wolf has spent several weeks in Russia and Roumania, and has concluded that emancipation cannot be staved off even there. Even under the present

appalling conditions there is no demand for Zionism in Russia, he tells us. There are 1,572 Zionist societies in Russia. But even were Mr. Wolf a correct observer of the contemporary, Russo-Jewish indifference to Zionism would argue nothing against that ideal. People rarely want what they ought to want, or what will do them good. As for the Jews of Poland, Mr. Wolf reminds us, they have already their political ideal—the independence of Poland. And their sacrifices for this ideal arouse an enthusiasm in that breast of his which all the sacrifices for Palestine leave cold. To redeem Palestine is reactionary; but to redeem Poland—that way heroism lies. Poor Polish dreamers! The Jews fought for the independence of Hungary, Kossuth himself is said to have had Jewish blood. And yet listen again to the Hungarian Arminius Vambéry: "I was all ablaze with enthusiasm when in my childhood I became acquainted with the life of the national heroes of Hungary. The heroic epoch of 1848 filled my youthful heart with genuine pride; and even later, in 1861, when I returned from Constantinople by the Danube boat, on landing at Mohacs I fell on my knees and kissed the ground with tears of true patriotic devotion in my eyes. I was intensely happy and in a rapture of delight, but had soon to realize that many, nay most, people questioned the genuineness of my Hungarianism. They criticized and made fun of me, because, they said, people of Jewish origin cannot be Hungarians, they can only be Jews, and nothing else." This was before the days of "the Zionist peril."

Similarly pathetic is the patriotism of the Roumanian Jew. At the time of the Berlin Congress, Dr. Dulberg tells us, a section of Roumanian Jews resented the interference of their West European brethren on their behalf. "Imbued with patriotism for their native country, fired with the enthusiasm caused by the war fever, these misguided would-be Roumanian citizens rewarded their friends with a sort of polite request to mind their own business. The Roumanian statesmen . . . managed, by a number of

promises to a few influential Jews, to stifle all opposition to the granting of the Roumanian independence. To-day we see the result of that policy."

As his final word on Russia, Mr. Wolf declares that "the magnitude of the Russo-Jewish question excludes Zionism or any scheme of emigration from the category of effective remedies." It is a pity he did not point this out to Baron de Hirsch, who certainly did contemplate the removal of the Jews from Russia. In the fifteenth century the Spanish Peninsula was the Jewish Russia, in so far as it was the centre of gravity of Jewish life. Jews formed a considerable percentage of the population. Had the Wolf of the period contended that the emigration of so vast a body was impossible, he would have sounded plausible. And yet, when the Expulsion came, a good many hundreds of thousands did manage to emigrate—at the point of the sword. For the rest, Zionism does not contemplate so sudden and wholesale a migration as that of the Sephardic Jews. Nor is it likely to be burdened in its beginnings with more than a manageable minority.

IX.

"The *Judenstaat* itself," says Mr. Wolf, "could never be such a revival of the Hebrew Commonwealth as would respond to the dreams of those who most earnestly support it." But some of "those who most earnestly support it" have no such revivalist aspiration. They know quite as well as Mr. Wolf that history cannot repeat itself. Zionism, though it counts among its followers a faction that dreams of the religious revival of the old Hebrew State, has always strictly maintained itself as a political movement which, just because it is not tied to anything but politics, embraces all its groups in a healthy heterogeneity. This dream-state of orthodoxy never existed even in the heyday of Zion. Pobiedonostseff has such an ideal for "Holy Russia," but even M. de Plehve could not make it mate-

rialize. The old Hebrew Commonwealth, however the yearning retrospective vision of orthodoxy mis-sees it, pursued no such narrow ideal. It was never limited to Jewish inhabitants. A "mixed multitude" accompanied the original Exodus. The Mosaic code contains numerous provisions for the treatment of the alien, "the stranger that sojourneth among you." He could not be King—just as no one not native born can be President in the United States—but he could hold the Jew as his slave. He was treated with the greatest magnanimity on the noble maxim "Thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Exod. xxiii. 9). "No ancient constitution," says Professor S. H. Butcher, "accorded to strangers such a position as they enjoyed under the Mosaic code." Thus Mr. Wolf's argument that "no state nowadays can be founded on a racial basis" falls to the ground, if he means, as he surely does mean, no state *limited* to a racial basis. A racial basis, like a religious basis, is a splendid foundation for a state. The *Uitlander* element is amply provided for in the Pentateuch. All that Zionism needs is that the Jews should form the majority instead of the minority, that the laws and institutions should be the expression of their own national genius, instead of laws and institutions to which they can "assimilate." The alien minority would remain either resident foreigners or would seek naturalization. In the latter case they would call themselves Jews of the Christian or other persuasions. They would probably present no numerical difficulty, for the compulsory closing on Saturday in addition to their own Sunday would handicap Christians too severely, and they might even be driven to Judaism. Those orthodox Jews to whom such a constitution appears objectionable are not only below the level of the old Jewish State, but below the level of the Gentiles in whose bosom they have encamped themselves. Those very Jews are the ones who are most surprised that there should be any clannishness in other

folk. Want of imagination is perhaps at the back of the Jew's "ingratiating himself into the national bond." The *Judenstaat*, if it cannot be the millennial dream-State of orthodoxy—and no real State can ever vie with a dream-State—may quite well be a revival of the Old Hebrew State as it actually was, minus those features which the State would itself have outgrown, had the evolution of the Jewish people not been violently disturbed by divorce from a soil. It is this relegation of them to the realm of dream that has preserved slavery, sacrifice, and possibly even polygamy, as sacred constituents of the Hebrew Commonwealth; in the real world these institutions would long since have passed away, as their embalmed mummies would crumble at the first breath of the air of reality. Thus the State, in resuming its life, would continue its career, not at the point of interruption, but at the point of resumption; and the battle between Church and State—one of the skipped phenomena—could be taken as decided in the general modern sense. Even the Jewish Church would have modified itself, just as the Hebrew spoken to-day would have differed from classical Hebrew by at least the difference between Chaucer and Browning. Books like Job and Ruth and Ecclesiastes significantly sound the larger note, which is sustained and broadened in many passages of the Talmud. The Bible is not merely the textbook of a religion, but the life and literature of a race. It would have gone on being written. It is to the reduction of Israel from a State to a sect that the religious, no less than the secular, crippling of Jewish life has been due. The manifold manifestations of corporate life have, by the absence of a territory, been narrowed to the "religious" (in the Christian sense). Whoso failed to conform to the one-seventh of life dropped or was excommunicated from the fold. Hence the appalling impoverishment of Jewish life. Imagine England with no history but that of members of the Established Church, drained of all its heterodox forces from Cromwell to

Shelley. Mr. Wolf himself told us (in his presidential address to the Literary Societies' Union) that for two centuries "the whole intellectuality of the Anglo-Jewish community, which rose above the mediocre, ran in non-Jewish channels, while the best minds left Judaism altogether." It was the survival of the unfittest. And yet Mr. Wolf expostulates with me for saying that it is a wretched thing for a religion to be saved by its fools. Even the fools are now going the way of "the literary mind," for, so far from all being well in the best of all possible communities, the very leaf of *The Jewish World* which contains Mr. Wolf's optimistic address contains also statistics from "A Teacher" to prove that "Judaism in the West End is undoubtedly on the wane." "Stop the influx from other parts to the West End of London, and within a period of two or three generations the synagogue will be a thing of the past."

And while Jewry is left in the old chaos, unable to reconstitute itself, this tiny Anglo-Jewish community produces a Beaconsfield who reorganizes the British Empire.

X.

In the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, if I remember aright, Mr. Wolf lays it down that a Jewish State, if not run on orthodox lines, would be deserted by its orthodox inhabitants. But where would they go to? Would they drop off the planet? Where could they find a better chance for the free exercise of orthodoxy? Mr. Wolf confounds the non-enforcement of orthodoxy with the prohibition of orthodoxy. Whether the synagogue is "established" or is independent of the State, Judaism will assuredly be the national religion. And if the orthodox were in a majority in the *Judenstaat*, they would be fools indeed to desert it. The national holidays, from Passover to Chanukah, would of themselves supply a more orthodox background than could be found in countries

with the counter-attractions of Easter and Christmas; not to mention the Saturday-Sabbath. And this background would have a continuous religious influence upon every inhabitant.

And just as Mr. Wolf confounds the non-enforcement of orthodoxy with its prohibition, so he confounds the permission of mixed marriages with their compulsoriness or their universal adoption. While it is obvious that the *Judenstaat* could never refuse to consider the marriages of its citizens with Britons, Americans, Germans, &c., &c., as illegal, it is equally obvious that marriages with foreigners would be as rare in the Jewish State as in any other. Every people, every circle of society even, marries within itself, by the laws of affinity, convenience, and least resistance. Mr. Wolf speaks as if the moment mixed marriages were not branded as illegal there would be a wild rush for alien alliances. The supposition is as uncomplimentary to his people as it is absurd and unpractical. The danger of disintegrating a religious community by mixed marriages only exists when the community has no territorial isolation, and even then mixed marriages are rather a symptom and an effect of antecedent disintegration than the cause of disintegration. Two really religious persons of different faiths are not likely to combine their lives. Nor should they, even if they happen to be Jew and Jewess of differing standpoints. The legitimacy of mixed marriages in a *Judenstaat* could no more destroy the State than Lord Rosebery's marriage to a Jewess or Mr. Chamberlain's marriage to an American tends to destroy England. This view of mine Mr. Wolf strangely describes as the abolition of the marriage restrictions of Ezra and Nehemiah. One wonders if he has ever read those marriage restrictions: "The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness. Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor

seek their peace or their wealth for ever" (Ezra ix. 11, 12). Ezra but reproduces the Pentateuchal marriage-law, aimed against "the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite" (Exod. xxxiv)—whose appalling abominations are recited in the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus. The absurdity of putting the higher races of to-day—peoples so high that the Jew must needs be "assimilated" to them—on the same footing as the ancient idol-worshippers and sexual perverts, is too glaring for words. The Americans, to whose flag the Jew swears allegiance as to the symbol of Bravery and Purity and Truth, are classed with the extinct pagans who made their children pass through the fire unto Moloch. And this despite the fact that the Anglo-Saxon civilization which is common to England and America is founded on Hebraic ideals, as Mr. Israel Gollancz has eloquently illustrated by the affinity of English and Hebrew literature. So far from wishing to abolish the marriage-restrictions of Ezra and Nehemiah, I should be for maintaining them more strongly than ever in East Africa, where the Biblical conditions are reproduced of a Jewish territory with barbarian neighbours. Had Kruger prevented alliances between the Boers and the Kaffirs, he would have been even more of an Old Testament figure. But if the Synagogue is to distort the purely topical legislation of Ezra and Nehemiah into a prohibition of marriage between the Jews and the higher races, why does the Synagogue stop short at the merely matrimonial portion of the text? The Jew is forbidden by Ezra not only to intermarry with other peoples, but even "to seek their peace or their wealth for ever." So far from "assimilating" to the English or the Americans, the Jew should draw his gaberdine closer as he passes by.

Fortunately no Jew in civilized environments does hold himself aloof from promoting the general welfare. Conversely, any people whose peace and wealth the Jew is permitted to seek, he is permitted to intermarry with.

XI.

Mr. Wolf's strange obsession as regards the Jewish people and its potentialities—that it is placed between the alternatives of re-barbarization and assimilation—reaches its climax in his account of the East-African scheme, which, he says, “aims at the creation of a Ghetto in the British Empire.” A more brazen attempt to beg the question I have never come across. Certainly no Zionist *aims* at a Ghetto. Mr. Wolf, like a clever conjurer, tries to palm off “Jewish State” and “Ghetto” as one and the same thing. The East-African scheme aims at placing the Jew in the antithesis to Ghetto conditions, and still Mr. Wolf babbles of Ghettos. At the same time he blames the Zionist for losing the opportunity of the J. C. A.'s help towards setting up this East-African Ghetto—the Zionist should drop his autonomy clause. But how the absence of this clause would make the colony less a Ghetto I fail to understand. The reason why we Zionists hold fast to the clause is that we believe *no* practical good can be done without it, and that we wish to remove the enterprise from the region of philanthropy, which is full of the ruins of colonies.

As regards the objection to autonomy “from an imperial point of view,” I leave Mr. Lucien Wolf to his delicious task of safeguarding the British Empire. His language, his picture of the perils to the British Constitution, strangely recalls the old pamphlets against the admission of the Jews into England, and it is indeed a curious irony that has put such arguments into the mouth of the biographer of Manasseh ben Israel. As if the British Empire were not the most motley collection of races ever held together in a single fabric! The argument that autonomy is necessary in the interests of the national customs of the Jews, Mr. Wolf meets by the amazing reply that these national customs are “strange and disagreeable.” The Ghetto “crystallizes the strange customs of the unassimi-

lated Jews." By the same jugglery by which *Judenstaat* becomes Ghetto, the parasitical oddities and superstitions that have grown up in the Ghetto are palmed off as the great underlying framework of Jewish national life. The centre of Jewish life is the Sabbath, and from a centre of edification it becomes in a Christian environment a centre of religious corruption. Yet Mr. Wolf has the hardihood to assert that "there is no essential restriction on the observance of the Jewish Sabbath." Of course there is no *compulsory* restriction. Such assertions leave me breathless. I merely reflect that by the Sabbath many of the crafts are closed to the Jewish masses, and most of the professions to the Jewish classes—journalism not excluded.

XII.

The Zionist peril is completed by the "development of a general *Anschauung* distinctly alien to the spirit of the nations among whom the emancipated Zionists now dwell."

This is reversing Ezra and Nehemiah with a vengeance. Mr. Wolf still boasts of "the Jewish mission," but the development in a missionary of a life-conception "distinctly alien to the spirit" of the heathen is a deplorable danger. Mr. Wolf speaks of the old Jewish State as having concentrated "the moral forces of the people for the miraculous work of converting the world to a higher spiritual life." Either the people has completed the work, in which case it may say "nunc dimittis," or it has not completed the work, in which case, is the establishment of a model State a bad way of going on with it? Perhaps we now need—for the world's good and our own—a new period of concentration, in which to fuse the spiritual spoils of the West with our own national genius. "We have emerged from the Ghetto," says Mr. Wolf, "better fitted to cope with the problems of that civilian life which is now the ideal of the modern world than almost any other people." So this is it at last—that mysterious Jewish mission. We can cope best with

the problems of *civilian* life! *Civilian* life—the six-sevenths in which Mr. Wolf has just been telling us we are to be indistinguishable from our neighbours. However, if civilian problems are what we now exist for, let us hasten to get a civilian platform on which to exhibit our superior solutions. “We have to show an example to the nations,” Mr. Wolf tells us. But only a nation can show an example to the nations. Become a nation, and then show your example.

But a nation Mr. Wolf refuses to belong to—unless it is somebody else’s. These superior sociological talents of ours—“is it possible, even if it were desirable, to bottle-up these forces in the squalid blind-alley of Theodor Herzl’s *Judenstaat*?” “Squalid blind-alley”! Was it desirable to bottle up Shakespeare in England or Dante in Italy? And oh, that squalid blind-alley of Athens! The anti-Zionists are indeed betrayed into strange propositions; but what else can follow from their perverted premise that the terrible tragedy of Jewish homelessness is a positive blessing both to the Jews and to the world? Their arguments, generalized, would deny the value of nationality altogether—no bad thesis, if only the anti-Zionists were not almost invariably chauvinists of the chauvinists. We have heard how the Polish anti-Zionists palpitate for the independence of Poland.

The real “squalid blind-alley” is the Jewish community, and Mr. Wolf himself has made the analysis. Its forces, too long “bottled-up” in the narrow bottles of a sect, seek expansion, and can only find it outside Judaism. I merely draw the conclusion and suggest the remedy—Judaism must enlarge itself, must resume its territorial basis, if it is to conserve these forces. No doubt the beginnings of a new *Judenstaat* would be rude and untempting, especially if everybody of Mr. Wolf’s culture keeps away; but Venice began with a few exiles on a marsh.

To imagine that forces are “bottled-up” by being nationally concentrated is a very shallow fallacy. The most widely diffused Jewish force, indeed the most widely

diffused force in the world—the Bible—was not the fruit of the Diaspora, but of the territorial period. Plato and Aristotle never journeyed to Oxford or to Göttingen to diffuse their philosophy. The architects of Greece did not live scattered all over the world to impress humanity with the beauties of Doric pillars or Corinthian capitals. Wagner deliberately "bottled-up" his forces in Bayreuth.

In truth, the rôle Mr. Wolf assigns to the Jews is not of producer, but of pedlar. Repressing his own *Anschauung*, he is to furnish his pack with the general stock of civilization, and then go about crying it as "Jewish."

XIII.

In a fine confused peroration Mr. Wolf tells us that "our mission is the Mendelssohnian mission as laid down in the famous letter of Moses Mendelssohn to Lavater. We have to show an example to the nations." I have heard all my life of the Mendelssohnian mission, but on going to the sources, lo! the mission proves a Mrs. Harris. Mendelssohn lays down no such mission in "the famous letter to Lavater." The old sage, with that same timidity of character which kept his activity largely anonymous, merely deprecated religious discussion, alleging that he preferred to argue by character rather than by controversy. One of the most satisfactory episodes in Mr. Wolf's own career is his controversy with Christianity in the pages of *The Jewish World*. Even supposing we generalize Mendelssohn's personal preferences into the notion that the Jewish mission is to convince through character, why cannot this be done in a State? A State carries infinitely more conviction than isolated individuals. "We have to show an example to the nations." I repeat, it takes a nation to do that. Show a nation with more virtue and less crime, more justice and less destitution, more learning and less brutality, than any other, and you will soon have all the world inquiring how it is done. There is thus

absolutely no opposition between "the Mendelssohnian mission" and Zionism!

It is amusing—after all this anti-Zionist cannonade—to find Mr. Wolf ending with the admission that "our highest traditional ideal is undoubtedly national!"

True, he adds that "it is not the nation of a kept principality." But no Zionist is craving for a kept principality rather than for independence. Also "it is the holy nation of the kingdom of priests." Well, there are Zionists too who take that view—"those who most earnestly support the *Judenstaat*." But Mr. Wolf is not to be found even in their camp. What, I wonder, are his reasons for not "promoting our highest traditional ideal"? Why does he preach a Judaism for jellyfishes, drifted hither and thither by the tides of history?

Mr. Wolf is, in brief, committed to this strange proposition—the Jews are a "religious community," whose miraculous mission has been, and still is, to convert the world to a higher spiritual life; but place them under conditions most favourable to the preservation of their religious individuality, and they will produce only a Ghetto of strange and disagreeable customs. And for climax of paradox this proposition is maintained, not by a Jewish Reformer, but by a Jew who took a recent opportunity to declare that he was "very far from sympathizing with the doctrinal and ceremonial aspects of Reform!"

XIV.

The proper answer to Zionism consists not in cries of peril, but in one of two opposition policies—either religious reconstruction with the conversion of Judaism into a missionary religion, or total fusion with the higher races and civilizations whom we have already Hebraized. The clue to our choice between the three policies lies in the thread which links us with the suffering Jewish masses. Any solution which excludes them must be itself excluded.

The policy of re-creating them as a political entity has the advantage that it does not exclude religious reconstruction and the world-mission, though that solution excludes it. The policy of disappearance is at least as difficult as the policy of reappearance, and the time and energy spent in dissipating the Jews might as well be spent in re-creating them.

It is characteristic of Mr. Wolf's anti-Zionism that it takes neither of these high-roads. It remains as shapeless and invertebrate as his Judaism, which is defined only by its negative opposition to Reform. The real Zionist peril is the searchlight Zionism brings to bear upon flabby thinking or feeble conviction.

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.